



NEWS FROM THE CITY NEIGHBORS FOUNDATION

SEPTEMBER 2021

An update on the work of City Neighbors Foundation, our City Neighbors schools, and our work to impact public education everywhere

The First Day of School Brings Flowers to City Neighbors

On the first day of school at City Neighbors, every student, K-12, enters our schools with a flower. Students bring these flowers to their classroom and place them in a class vase. As every student arrives, the few flowers become a full bouquet – a symbol of our classroom communities.

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year, City Neighbors community. Let's make it one of community, connection, belonging and beauty.



City Neighbors High School Selected as Inaugural Partner for Loyola University's Karson Institute for Race, Peace & Social Justice



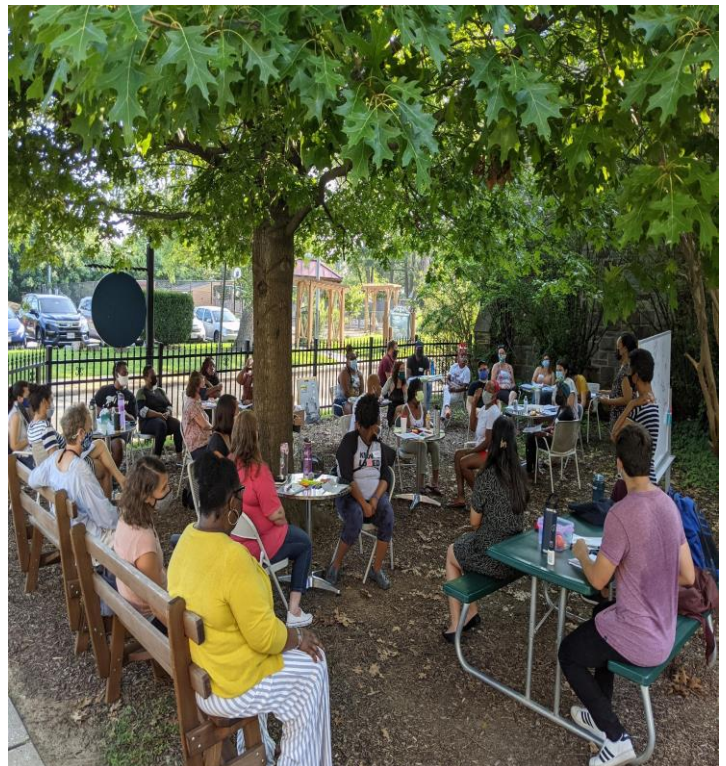
City Neighbors High School is honored to be the inaugural site for The Teaching and Learning Center at the Karson Institute for Race, Peace & Social Justice at Loyola University, led by Dr. Kaye Whitehead. Dr. Whitehead will engage with City Neighbors High School over three years supporting our school, staff, and community on our journey to realizing the power and promise of equity through in-depth professional development, leadership support, and the evaluation and consideration of our structures, processes, and approaches. We are excited to work with the Karson Institute and Dr. Kaye.

[Director position at Loyola's Karson Institute elevated and redefined - Newsroom](#)

City Neighbors 2030

Launched in spring 2021, City Neighbors schools and City Neighbors Foundation are engaged in a fourteen-month, community-based process to design the future of City Neighbors. We have partnered with Star Cypress Partners who have been so far hard at work getting to know our schools, our organization, and our history. This fall, they launch work with our community.

Last week, Star Cypress Partners started working with our staffs. This picture shows the staff of our founding school, City Neighbors Charter School, participating in a future-design session in the school courtyard beneath an oak tree that was planted by our school founders. Seventeen years later, we are gathered together under the shade of that tree still creating, designing, and imagining the best school we can imagine – together.



Summer 2021 at City Neighbors



This summer we welcomed 54 students to our City Neighbors Children Summer Camp – a four-week summer program for rising 1st through 4th graders – providing highly engaging project-based learning, academic support, and lots of camp experiences including trips to the blueberry farm, Great Kids Farm, Irvine Nature Center, and more!



This summer, we were excited to welcome 9th and 10th grade students back to our building for Summer Infusion – a week long summer experience for incoming City Neighbors High School students. This experience allows students the opportunity to build community and connect with school to launch their academic learning and consider their commitments about the year ahead.



DIY PD at City Neighbors: Join us October 21, 5 – 6:15 PM



City Neighbors Foundation will host its first *DIY PD at City Neighbors* of the year on October 21 from 5 - 6:15 PM. DIY PD is a simple concept and a free professional development opportunity.

DIY PD at City Neighbors is an emergent professional development opportunity, driven by the community of practitioners in attendance. At DIY PD, we gather and connect - and have four short breakout sessions for you to choose from, with participants either sharing a great strategy, a great question, or a problem of practice – all rooted in our child-centered, democratic ideals of education.

We are excited to announce that we are entering our fourth year of hosting *DIY PD at City Neighbors* sessions and have had over 200 educators participate. We are energized by the growing DIY PD community. Come join us! [Register here](#).

Welcome New City Neighbors Educators!



We are excited to welcome seventeen new educators to the City Neighbors teaching community across our three schools. Before they join our community, teachers go through an extensive hiring process that includes several visits and interviews, and work with almost every constituency in our school. Once hired, teachers new to City Neighbors participate in an in-depth induction process that includes a summer orientation, ongoing cohort workshops through the first half of the school year, and two years of one-on-one mentorship by an experienced City Neighbors teacher. We look forward to having these professionals at our school for many years to come!

Welcome to the New Members of our City Neighbors Leadership Team



Catherine Drayton-Barber, Assistant Principal, City Neighbors Charter School

Catherine began her career as a secondary special educator in the district over 27 years ago at Joseph C. Briscoe in BCPS. She has worked as a lead teacher in a MANSEF school and as a special education instructional team leader/IEP Chair in Howard County Public schools. Over a decade later, she returned to City Schools as an educational specialist for the Office of Special Education. Catherine went on to become a MTSS Specialist and Special Education Liaison within the Office of Specialized Instruction. A proud Baltimore City College Knight, Catherine went on to complete her undergraduate work at Howard University, her M.Ed. from Goucher College, and is currently a doctoral candidate at Notre Dame of Maryland University. Her favorite quote comes from Muhammed Ali, "If your dreams don't scare you, they aren't big enough."



Elizabeth Mencer, Educational Associate, City Neighbors Hamilton

Hello! I'm Elizabeth (Liz) Mencer, the new Ed Associate at City Neighbors Hamilton. I am originally from Pittsburgh, PA. Throughout my life I have always had a strong passion about education and teaching young people. After completing my undergraduate program of Second English Education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, I made the decision to move to Maryland seven years ago to pursue my teaching career. At my first school in Prince George's County I served as the 6th/7th grade Language Arts teacher where I taught SPED, ESOL, Gen Ed., Honors, and TAG for two years. I was then moved to Reading Department Chair which I fulfilled for another two years before making my way to City Neighbors Hamilton. For the past three years I have had the honor to serve as the Middle School ELA/Humanities teacher. I also acquired my Masters in Education and Teacher Leadership to deepen my pedagogy and prepare for a future leadership role. Taking on this leadership role will provide me with the opportunities to connect me with students, families, and the community in a new, dynamic way. I'm thrilled to embark on this new position and be entrusted with a leadership role at our school.

Welcome Rickkay King, Principal Fellow from the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition



The [Diverse Charter Schools Coalition](#) is a national coalition of schools committed to interrupting inequity through the development and support of intentionally integrated schools. As part of its multifaceted work, DCSC places four to eight Principal Fellows in schools around the country. Each Principal Fellow, after a one-year Fellowship, will go forward in designing or launching an intentionally integrated school the following year.

City Neighbors Hamilton is excited to welcome Rickkay King as our Principal Fellow for the 2021-22 school year. Rickkay is co-founder of the [Phoenix International School of the Arts](#), a new public charter middle school focused on international studies, social design, and the arts - and the first public charter school to open in Charles County, Maryland. The school will open in fall 2022.

Born and raised in Chicago, IL, Rickkay's interests surround Male Studies, Mental Health Awareness, and promoting International Education to marginalized communities. As the President and CEO of The Now Boarding Corporation, a non-profit organization he founded in 2015, he promotes studying abroad and second language acquisition among American minority male high school students. To date, his organization has introduced the world of travel to many young minds by sponsoring passports for students across the country.

Rickkay received his bachelor's degree from Roosevelt University in Psychology, 2011. He obtained a master's degree in Psychology from Pepperdine University, 2015 and is currently in the dissertation phase of a doctorate in Global Leadership & Change at Pepperdine University. His dissertation research surrounds foreign language instruction in minority communities and how African American Vernacular English (AAVE) is viewed in these classrooms.

City Neighbors is a founding member of the Diverse Charter Schools Coalition. It was named "School of the Year" in 2020. Mike Chalupa, Executive Director of City Neighbors Foundation, currently serves as the Board President for DCSC.

The 11th Annual Progressive Education Summit: January 22, 2022



Mark your calendars for the 11th Annual Progressive Education Summit on Saturday, January 22, 2022!

We are excited to roll up our sleeves with our 2022 Summit Steering Committee to create a day of joy, challenge, and inspiration – all rooted in our shared commitment to child-centered, democratic ideals of education. On this year's Summit Steering Committee:

Amy Bopp, *Family League of Baltimore*

amalia deloney, *Deutsch Foundation*

Cristina Duncan Evans, *Baltimore Teachers Union*

Simone Gibson, *Morgan State University*

Charelle James, *Urban Teachers*

Robyn Little, *McDonogh School*

Dawn Shirey, *Baltimore City Schools*

Shyla Rao, *City Neighbors Hamilton*

Stay tuned!

Learn More about City Neighbors Foundation

